

Agriculture and food security in the Hindu Kush Himalaya

31%

population is food insecure

50%

population is facing malnutrition

40%

children under 5 years suffer from stunting

35%

women (aged 19–49 years) are anaemic



Key issues in agriculture in the HKH

Climate change

Variability in water supplies, temperature rise, and increased incidence of floods and droughts

Decline in agrobiodiversity

Share of traditional crops (barley, oats, millets, sorghum, buckwheat) in total grain production has declined from 10% in 1990 to 3.1% in 2017

Rapid youth outmigration

Around 41% of farming households in the region face frequent labour shortages in agriculture due to high youth outmigration

Inadequate use of digital technologies in agriculture

A majority of farmers do not have adequate access to digital information services on climate, market, and production technologies

Increasing workload on women

Around 60%–95% of agricultural activities are performed by women

Drying up of water resources

Springs and traditional melt-water dependent irrigation systems are drying

Lack of value chains and limited use of renewable energy in processing

About 40%–55% post-harvest losses in fruits and vegetables

What is ICIMOD doing for agriculture in the HKH?

Our research and solutions mainly focus on following areas:

- ▲ Promoting climate-resilient and diverse agriculture
- ▲ Supporting the use of digital technologies for climate change adaptation and evidence-based decision making
- ▲ Promoting and demonstrating value chains of mountain niche products with the use of renewable energy
- ▲ Supporting local communities and institutions for the revival of depleting water resources such as springs and traditional farmer-managed irrigation systems
- ▲ Supporting the productive use of remittances in local small businesses and agricultural value chains

About ICIMOD

We are a unique intergovernmental knowledge and learning centre working with communities in the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region to address the region's complex and increasing climate, environmental, and developmental challenges.

The HKH region sprawls around 4.2 million km² across eight countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Myanmar, and Pakistan – housing 240 million people and providing ecosystem services to 1.6 billion people living in downstream basins. The HKH region has the largest area under ice and snow outside of the polar regions and contains the headwaters of 10 major rivers of Asia.

We are committed to helping build a greener, more inclusive, and climate-resilient HKH.

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